



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – July 23, 2004

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Mark White attended representing the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis and it was announced that Jim Hill has been appointed to the Citizens' Advisory Committee for Lewis County. Fourteen of the Partnership's twenty-eight member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Ten additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

The next meeting of the CAC will be in September. Between now and then the chairman of the committee has asked that counties review their current appointments to the committee and recruit members is appropriate.

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

The STC prepared to lead a discussion of priority issues later during this meeting. The next meeting of the STC will be on August 5th from 10:00 until 3:00 in Olympia.

Water Quality Committee

The WQC met in Montesano and discussed the Detailed Implementation Plan that describes how recommendations of all approved TMDLs for the Chehalis Basin will be achieved. Ecology must submit a Detailed Implementation Plan for all TMDLs to EPA, but it is not approved by EPA as a separate document and it will not change or add new pollution requirements to existing TMDLs. Ecology has waited to submit the Detailed Implementation Plan to EPA until the Partnership completed the watershed plan so that the recommendations of the plan and the Detailed Implementation Plan could be coordinated. The Partnership has had an active role in development of the Detailed Implementation Plan from very early in the process. This has primarily been through the Water Quality Committee which was the advisory group that helped Ecology write the Detailed Implementation Plan. The Committee has thoroughly reviewed the document and made many recommendations that were incorporated. The Committee recommends that the Partnership endorse the Detailed Implementation Plan.

Dave Rountry from Ecology briefly reviewed the Detailed Implementation Plan. Five handouts were provided (copies attached). The Detailed Implementation Plan describes what different entities will do help achieve the recommendations of TMDLs. The language describing the work was developed by the groups that will do the work. A recent addition to the Detailed Implementation Plan is under the heading "An Integrated View of Monitoring Site Priorities." This section currently covers the upper basin but information about the lower basin will be added.

The Chair of the Water Quality Committee reported that the committee worked very closely with Ecology to develop the Detailed Implementation Plan and has worked very hard to ensure appropriate changes were made. The Committee requests that the Partnership review the Detailed Implementation Plan and recognize the relationship between what it proposes and the water quality action items recently approved in the Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan. Having a completed Detailed Implementation Plan will strengthen watershed planning and enhance basin groups' ability to apply for water quality grant funding. During the ensuing discussion the following comments and ideas were made:

- If Partnership members make the effort to implement this Detailed Implementation Plan will Ecology continue to pass new regulations? *Response: Regulations are usually the result of changes in state or federal laws. Ecology representatives at this meeting are not aware of any changes to existing water quality regulations or new water quality regulations that are in the works with one exception that the Partnership is well aware of -- proposed changes to state water quality standards (a regulation) have been through an extensive multi-year public process and if EPA ever approves them they will become the new water quality standards for Washington State.*
- That response raises an issue that concerns me. Why has the Department of Ecology established the dissolved oxygen standard in Washington 8.0 mg/liter when Idaho has a standard of 6.0 mg/liter? They are both designed to protect salmon. *Response: see attached memo from Kahle Jennings to the Partnership.*
- Is there any way we can develop a contract with the state that says "if the members of the Chehalis Basin Partnership do x, y and z then state regulations won't change for ten years? *Response: that is an interesting idea that should have been developed and included in the watershed plan.*
- How do we demonstrate success through monitoring?
- If we endorse this Detailed Implementation Plan then it means we will do it and I don't agree with it.

The purpose of having this discussion on the Detailed Implementation Plan today was to refresh the Partnership's memory on a topic we have not discussed for several months while we completed the watershed plan. Formal action on the Detailed Implementation plan will be requested at the August Partnership meeting.

The next meeting of the Water Quality Committee will be August 12th from 9:00 until noon in Montesano.

Other Business

Partnership Membership: Chapter 5 of the draft Operating Procedures was handed out (copy attached). The Operating Procedures will replace the Interim Bylaws if/when they are approved. The first four chapters have previously been reviewed by the Partnership. With the current discussion about the future structure of the Partnership, a discussion of Partnership membership is timely. Further discussion of Chapter 5 will occur at the August Partnership meeting.

Future Partnership Meeting Locations: The Partnership is scheduled to meet at the Labor and Industries Building in August and December 2004. Locations for the September, October and November Partnership meetings have not been found. Napavine and Montesano have both been suggested as possible meeting locations and preliminary contacts indicate they are available.

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning

Bob Fink (Mason County) distributed a handout titled “Chehalis Basin Partnership – July 23, 2004, Agenda Item B.1.” (copy attached) and led a discussion of the information in that handout which included the following comments:

- The purpose of watershed planning is to coordinate action.
- Implementation options need further discussion. More “planning” work may not be necessary to begin implementation and the Watershed Planning Act Phase 4 may not be the best option for implementation.
- The Partnership should stick with the “pre-2514” structure and move forward with implementation under implementation option #2.
- The Steering/Technical Committee should expand upon the pros and cons for each of the alternatives listed in the handout.
- Some research needs to be done on what is required for the legislature to form a legal entity.
- Lee Daneker contributed a lot to the Partnership and EPA needs to be approached with a request that someone from EPA with similar skills be appointed to participate on the Partnership.

Discussion will be continued at the August Partnership meeting.

Salmon Recovery Project

In June the Partnership approved a list of salmon recovery projects for the Chehalis Basin. Those projects have been sent to the Salmons Recovery Funding (SRF) Board for review. Grays Harbor County, acting as lead entity for salmon recovery, will meet with the SRF Board in August or September to discuss the projects. If the SRF Board judges our overall approach to be adequate we should receive \$400,000 to start with. That will fund the first two to three projects on the Chehalis Basin list. The remainder of the Chehalis Basin projects will compete statewide for the remaining funds. A final decision on how many Chehalis Basin projects will be funded is expected in September.

US Army Corps of Engineers Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Projects

Beth Coffey is deployed in Iraq for a year. Laura Orr is the interim project manager for the Flood Damage Reduction project. The final Environmental Impact Statement and final General Reevaluation Report is done and has been submitted to USACE headquarters in Washington DC for approval. A funding recommendation follows approval but it is unclear whether a funding

recommendation will be made or if it will happen in time for the October 2004 to October 2005 federal budget.

Ecosystem Restoration study is going well except for funding. A computer model called Ecosystem Diagnostic Treatment (EDT) that can be used to prioritize habitat restoration efforts has been completed and will be previewed at a meeting July 29th at the Ecology building in Lacey.

The Corps has also paid for a comparison of the 2002 and 2003 Chehalis Basin flow data and has a hydrologist that is reviewing all existing hydraulic data for the Chehalis Basin and providing a summary.

The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be August 27th at the Labor and Industries building on Linderson Way in Tumwater from 9:00 until 11:30.

Decisions

- **Continue discussion of the TMDL Detailed Implementation Plan, meeting location, Watershed plan implementation options and structure of the Partnership at the August meeting.**